Please amend the application as follows:

In the Specification:

Please replace the first page of the Specification with the clean version of the first page provided herein.

In the Claims:

1. (Presently Amended) ~~A purified and~~ An isolated and purified polynucleotide selected from the group consisting of:

(a) a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide having ~~an~~ the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2, and

(b) a polynucleotide which is fully complementary to the polynucleotide of (a),

2. (Presently Cancelled) The polynucleotide of claim 1 wherein the polynucleotide comprises nucleotides selected from the group consisting of natural, non-natural and modified nucleotides.

3. (Presently Cancelled) The polynucleotide of claim 1 wherein the internucleotide linkages are selected from the group consisting of natural and non-natural linkages.

4. (Presently Amended) The polynucleotide of claim 1 wherein the polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide having ~~an~~ the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

5. (Previously Amended) An isolated and purified polynucleotide that is an expression vector comprising a polynucleotide of claim 1.

6. (Presently Amended) A host cell comprising ~~a~~ the heterologous expression vector of claim 5.

7. (Presently Amended) A process for expressing a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 ~~MurD protein of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*~~ in a recombinant host cell, comprising:

(a) transforming a ~~suitable~~ host cell with an expression vector of claim 5; and,

(b) culturing the host cell of step (a) in conditions under which allow expression of said ~~the MurD protein~~ polypeptide from said expression vector.